

Name of Clinic/Seminar

2010 NSCAA Convention. January 13-17, 2010. Philadelphia Convention Center, PA.

Name of Presenter

NSCAA Director of Coaching Development Jeff Tipping

Area of Excellence

Functional Training – Advanced coaching methodology that occurs in the specific area of the field where players normally play. Functional training sessions generally involve a small number of players who operate in close proximity to each other on the field, and generally include opponents who operate in the same area of the field (i.e. backs vs. forwards).

Description of the Session

Overview: The presenter starts with a couple of warm-up exercises and introduces some fundamental notions regarding passing and receiving techniques applied to the position roles of players and timing of coordinated actions between passer and receiver. He then gets into a small sided possession game that starts with a 5 versus 2 in two distinct zones. He then progresses to a full game like situation with shots and counter attacks by adding players and removing restrictions. The final format is a 8 versus 8 game including goalkeepers. One side uses a 2-3-2 formation while the other is lined up as 3-3-1. The whole session is aimed at feeding the strikers so they can turn and shoot, combine with a partner or play a 3 men combination with a midfielder in order to attack the opposite goal.

Warm-up 1: 8 players form a circle around the other 8 in the middle. Players pair up so that the player outside the circle has a ball. The player in the middle checks to his partner, receives a pass that is returned one touch. He then makes an angled run for a return pass, indicates where he wants the ball and quickly checks over his shoulder while the ball is going towards him. Variations are presented where receiver fakes a run around a defender spinning outside for the return pass, lets ball run outside or flicks ball for a self pass inside the defender.

Warm-up 2: Groups of 3 players. One ball per group. 2 player side to side about 5 yards apart exchange passes while the third player is the target and stands about 15 yards in front. The players exchanging passes must constantly look up to see if the target player is checking in for a penetrating pass. The target player must time his call so that the ball is almost at the player's feet of the eventual passer. At the beginning, the target player simply returns the ball to one of the two other players. Then a progression is made where the non passing player steps up to support the target and combines with him. The target passes to the supporting player and does an outside spin for a return pass in the space. Then these two players start exchanging passes while the player that was the original

passer becomes the target player. Some variations are introduced where the target player keeps the ball and uses the supporting player as a decoy, or a one touch pass from the target to the supporting player who must arrive early (almost before the ball), or overlap or takeover by one of the two players exchanging passes before passing to the target. For all of those variations, the target is always asked to spin outside.

Main Session – Part 1: The first part of the main session is a small sided possession game of 5 versus 2. The area is split in two zones: one zone represents the penalty area where 2 forwards are making checks to receive a pass from their midfielders. The other zone, which is in front, is where 3 midfielders build up the play for the forwards and are playing against two opponents. The shape of the offensive midfielders is an inverted triangle. The offensive midfielders are trying to pass to one of their two forwards who are performing checking runs without leaving their zone. At first, the ball is simply returned to the midfielders for the next try. If the defensive midfielders win the ball they just return it to the coach who is standing behind. Later, a goaltender is added and the forwards are encouraged to take a strike at goal. Variations for receiving ball, like in the warm-up, are introduced: let ball run, crisscross run. Midfielder is also encouraged to play to non checking forward if window exists since he may not be covered. Forwards are then restricted to two touches and encouraged to call loudly for ball.

Coaching points:

- Timing of check runs by forwards
- Spin outside after receiving pass
- Other forward goes for rebound after strike by teammate
- Loud call from forwards
- Midfielder to look up while ball is traveling to them
- Forwards not to show too early

Main Session – Part 2: Building on part 1, 2 marking defenders are added next to the forwards. This is now a 5 versus 4 small sided game plus a goalkeeper. Same rules as above but now, the forwards are encouraged to check away in order to bring their marking defender nearer to the goal and create space behind them. Again, it starts as a possession game and then turns into an attack on goal.

Coaching points:

- Repeat above coaching points
- Communication amongst all offensive players

Main Session – Part 3: 2 fullbacks are added to the offensive team making it a 7 versus 4 small sided game plus a goalkeeper. Forwards are encouraged to lean into their marking defender in order to know where they are. They then push off their defender to check in for passes. If the defensive team wins the ball they pass the ball back to the offensive fullbacks who restart play immediately. When ball goes out of bounds, the goalkeeper restarts play with his defenders.

Coaching points:

- Repeat above coaching points
- Forwards to lean into their markers in order to make space for themselves by pushing off to receive a pass in front or knowing to turn inside or outside depending on the coverage

Main Session – Part 4: A third defender is added in the defensive zone making it a 7 versus 5 small sided game plus a goalkeeper. Now, one player is allowed to his next zone if he can dribble through with the ball. This goes for both the offensive team attacking the goal and the defensive team trying to intercept and give the ball back to the offensive fullbacks. The 3 men combination is introduced for the attacking team by passing to one of the forwards who passes back to the other side midfielder who dribbles in.

Coaching points:

- Repeat above coaching points
- Introduce the 3 men combinations to enable switching the point of attack

Main Session – Part 5: Now we add another zone with a goalkeeper and where the 2 offensive fullbacks have to play against a forward from the other team. We also add a third midfielder in the center zone for the team that was defending with two midfielders. This will make a 8 versus 8 game. One team is playing with a 3-3-1 formation while the other plays a 2-3-2. At first, nobody is allowed to cross zones. Then, players are allowed to cross zones if they dribble in or if they use a three men combination or a 1-2 pass with a teammate. Finally, all restrictions are lifted for the rest of the session.

Coaching points:

- Repeat above coaching points
- Encourage forwards to shoot on goal as soon as they turn